Church Union News and Views

Organ of the Continuation Committee
of the
South India Joint Committee on Union

Vol. I NOVEMBER 1930 No. 3

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THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY, PARK TOWN, MADRAS.

Vol. I **NOVEMBER 1930** **No. 3**

Editorial

What is the Church?

We are sorry that we cannot reproduce in this number the article in the *United Church Review* to which Mr. Maclean's article in our 'Clippings' is an answer. We commend his answer to our readers, however, with the special request that they should not be too dogmatic about any particular position or theory that they may hold with reference to the Church or its organization.

Instead of saying 'What is the Church?', it might be better to say 'Who is the Church?' for, after all, the Church is not an organization that exists apart from men. It is not a theoretical institution or an abstraction of any kind, but is only an organization of men who, because of their faith in Christ, are joined together for the service of God and for mutual helpfulness. No doubt it was established by Jesus Himself. No doubt it was led by the Holy Spirit in its early days. No doubt, either, that it has been led by the Spirit throughout the ages and is being led by Him to-day. We err only when we think that we alone are that Church and that the Holy Spirit leads us only. Hence the Church is a growing, changing body and it completely fulfils its functions when it obeys Christ, the Head, and serves all men. Love is its motive force. Fellowship is the expression of that force. Unity is its ideal,—but unity in love and not in form merely or in outward detail.

Bishops, Canon, Creeds, Baptism

Episcopacy does not stand alone in its appeal to historicity. Like it the Canon of Holy Scriptures, the formulation of the Creeds, and the adoption of Infant Baptism were acts of the Church during its early history. None of these can go back to Christ for definite proof or even for complete justification.

Neither Jesus nor His apostles ever possessed a copy of the New Testament. The completion of the Canon of the New Testament was a slow process and the first mention of a canon containing the same books we now hold eligible for inclusion in the Canon was not until the fourth century. Different portions of the New Testament and even different Gospels were in use in various Churches or countries. Some books were not readily included. Others were excluded with reluctance, and hence the list was not completed until about the year A.D. 400. The Christian Church during these centuries was busy building up its own sacred Scriptures and finally approved of a list that has been maintained ever since.

Creeds occupy a similar position. We can find a few simple sentences in New Testament literature which suggest a credal formula. Paul uses the expression 'Jesus is Lord' in this sense. No attempt, however, is made in the New Testament to set forth a full statement of belief. How early the Roman baptismal formula may be called a creed we cannot say, but it certainly was not generally approved until quite late in Christian history. The Creed commonly called Nicene was not adopted until A.D. 370 and was modified even after that. Yet to-day most Christians accept the Apostles' Creed, and a large proportion of Christians accept and use the Nicene Creed, and they do so on the authority of the historic Church which developed these documents long after the days of Jesus and His apostles.

Many to-day justify infant baptism on the basis of the New Testament though there is no direct case mentioned in its pages. There are inferences and suggestions that may lead us to believe infant baptism is authorized by Jesus and the apostles, but here also we must go to the middle of the second century or later before we find the practice well established throughout the Church. Again it was the historic Church continuing and developing from the days of Jesus through the days of the apostles into the second and later centuries that established this custom.

It is not possible to ascribe to the Church from A.D. 90 to A.D. 1517 a mythical or even quiescent position. It was a real Church, of real believers, led by the Holy Spirit, doing what it could to further the cause of Christ on earth. No doubt at times it erred, as we do to-day. No doubt

at times it was more dead than alive. But at all times, even at its worst, there was in it the faithful remnant, through which the Holy Spirit was working. Even at the time of the Reformation all good Christians did not leave the Church and join the Reformers, for after all the Reformation was a local and not an œcumenical movement. It was confined to north-western Europe, and we cannot believe that only in those countries did God have faithful children on earth at that time. We must learn to reverence the Church as a continuous institution, from age to age doing its best to make the Kingdom real. We also in our day belong to the continuing, historic Church and we should do all we can to make that one Church again a reality.

Meeting of The Joint Committee on Union

A Meeting of the Joint Committee is to be held in Madras on November 12 and succeeding days when reports will be received from the representatives of the three Churches as to what has been done in their various gatherings, and then attempts will be made to revise the 'Proposed Scheme' in the light of the action of these bodies. There are several very difficult questions that will arise and there will be need for divine guidance to enable all the members of the Committee to see eye to eye and agree on certain revisions that seem necessary. The one thing that must be remembered is that the Church after union is to be 'the spiritual home' of all those who are now ministers and members of the bodies carrying on the negotiations. A 'home' means a place where brothers and sisters can live together in peace and happiness. And so in our united Church those who were formerly Anglicans, whether High Church or Low Church, and those that were formerly Wesleyans, and those who were formerly members of the S.I.U.C., whether in origin true-blue Presbyterians from Scotland or the Netherlands, or zealous Congregationalists from England or America, all these must be able to live together and be real brothers and sisters, in love honouring one another. That will not be easy, but our love must transcend our dogmas and theories.

Round Table Conference on Union in N. India

As stated in a notice among our 'Clippings' there will be a meeting in Delhi from November 18 on, in which representatives of several North India Churches, including the North India United Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the English Baptists, the United Brethren, and others will meet to consider the possibility of further union. The organizers of this Round Table have invited a representative of the Church of India,

Burma and Ceylon to be present and such a representative has been appointed. They have also asked the Joint Committee on Union in South India to send representatives of the Wesleyans and of the S.I.U.C. and these have been appointed in the persons of Rev. W. E. Tomlinson and Rev. J. J. Banninga.

Articles

The Bournemouth Conference

By J. V. CHELLIAH, Esq., M.A., Moderator, S.I.U.C.

The International Council of Congregational Churches consists mainly of representatives of England and America, and was first held in London in 1891. Two were held subsequently in Boston, one in Edinburgh, and the one held this year, the fifth, assembled at Bournemouth on the southern coast of England.

Bournemouth is one of the most delightful sea-coast towns in England and is called a Garden City. The place is delightful especially during summer, and thousands flock there to enjoy the bright sunshine of its beach. We were fortunate in having fine weather during the meetings, and I felt quite at home as the sunshine during the day and the coolness of the night resembled the weather in Jaffna during December and January. The hospitality extended to the delegates can best be described by the word, royal. I was impressed by the way in which the citizens of Bournemouth vied with one another to make us happy and comfortable. The Mayor of the city, a good Congregationalist, helped us in various ways, and the Corporation left the Town Hall at our disposal for use as offices, etc. The meetings were held at the Richmond Hill Church, of which Dr. J. D. Jones, C.H., M.A., D.D., is pastor. Dr. Jones was chosen Moderator of the Council in succession to Dr. James L. Barton, the missionary statesman of the A.B.C.F.M. Dr. Jones conducted the meetings with admirable dignity, tact, and wisdom. At every session the very spacious Church was crowded with delegates, associate delegates and visitors. The Assembly consisted largely of Americans and Britishers, and there was a sprinkling of representatives from Canada, Australia and South Africa. I was the only Indian present, while China was represented by one and Japan by two delegates.

Before I started I was told plainly that I was to present the subject of the Church Union Scheme of South India to the Council. Somebody at Bournemouth seems to have blundered in the matter and I was assigned the subject of 'World Paganism'! And this, in spite of the fact that there were in the programme the following topics: 'The Living Church—

Its unity' and 'The Church in the Mission Field.' I protested, but the British members of the Executive Committee were at first disinclined to allow me to speak on the subject of union, and the Moderator told me plainly that it was unfair for any one to champion the scheme without giving an opportunity to an opponent to present the other side of the question. I was determined, however, not to speak on any other subject. Eventually through the help of my American friends I was allowed to present the subject in such circumstances that I had to shorten my address considerably. I was glad, however, that the Rev. George Parker of the L.M.S. in speaking of the Church in the Mission Field, presented a strong case for the Union Scheme. These addresses were followed by a vigorous criticism of the scheme by Dr. Jones, who maintained that union should not be effected in the Mission Field before it could be accomplished among the older churches in the West, and that if Indian Christians wished to go their own way, they should not expect to get the co-operation of the Churches in the West. The Rev. G. E. Phillips, Secretary of the L.M.S., replied effectively, and a few young American leaders expressed the opinion that nothing should be done to discourage the noble experiment that Indian Christians wished to try. On the whole the American delegation was in favour of trying out the scheme. But the English section did not seem to have made up their minds.

The Moderator ruled that the discussion on the Church Union Scheme should not be reported in the Press, and accordingly all that the *Christian World,* the chief organ of Congregationalism in England, contained was: 'Then the Council discussed *in camera* the South Indian Union Scheme.' However, our addresses and the discussion on this subject are included in the Report on the Bournemouth Council, which is already published. No definite pronouncement was, of course, made on the subject, and all that was done was to make a vague statement that the Council could not act on this matter but that it felt that it could not approve any scheme which was built upon the theory that Episcopacy is of the essence of the Church. I need not point out that our scheme has no such basis.

I should like to point out here that any distrust of the scheme that was shown was the outcome, not of a study of the scheme, but of ignorance of it. This is not a conjecture on my part. I speak from my experience with those with whom I discussed the scheme. First, very few, I found, had studied the scheme carefully. And the few that professed to have studied it, showed amazing ignorance of the meaning of its provisions. When I explained the exact implications of the various clauses to which they took exception and the reasons why certain concessions had to be made, not a few of these people considerably modified their opposition. The significant fact that three of the ablest Congregationalist theologians

of England, Drs. Garvie, Selbié, and Bartlet, were in favour of the scheme strengthens my contention. For as they were consulted from time to time on crucial points, and knew exactly how differences between the parties came to be settled, they were for giving our scheme a trial. Dr. Bartlet in his paper gave expression to his sympathy, and the other two expressed to me their regret that they could not be present when the matter was taken up.

A second reason why people in the older Churches, especially those in England, are not cordial in this matter, is the long heritage of prejudice which exists among Episcopalians and Nonconformists. Centuries of controversy and separation have left wounds that cannot be healed in a day. I have heard Congregational ministers tell stories of the intolerant attitude of episcopal ministers towards them. We must recognize the fact that the same cordiality that exists between these two sections in India does not exist in England or even America.

It is a matter of regret that the Bournemouth Council could not make a definite pronouncement on our scheme, as did the Lambeth Conference. As I have pointed out, the subject was not definitely in the Bournemouth Agenda, and those present had not studied the scheme as thoroughly as the Bishops. And then, it should be remembered that while Lambeth is a formally organized body, the Council was not, and so was not in a position to make authoritative pronouncements.

The Methodist Episcopal Church and Church Union

The idea seems to have been going around of late here in India that the Methodist Episcopal Church is about the most difficult group to negotiate with on the subject of Church Union that there is to be found. Since the editor of *Church Union* has honoured me with an invitation to contribute an article, I am glad to use this opportunity to do what I can do to help set matters in their true light. However, it must be understood that my views are only those of an individual. Our Church as such here in India has made no definite pronouncement on the subject of Union other than that it is in sympathy with the movement, and that it is willing to study the subject, but it is not ready yet to enter into negotiations for organic union. In the meantime, it is possible, I think, to set down quite definitely certain positions and attitudes which our Church holds, and as an individual I shall briefly attempt to do this.

In 1928 at our Central Conference, a Commission on Church Union was set up for the purpose of discussing the subject of Union with other

like-minded Churches, but not to enter into negotiations. In April, 1929, a meeting for such discussion and conversation was held in Lucknow and besides our own representatives the parties most interested present were the representatives of the United Church of Northern India and the Wesleyans. The Church of England was represented by an 'unofficial observer'. These conversations at Lucknow showed that there was a great deal in common between the chief bodies represented, and that there appeared to be no differences either of faith, practice, or polity which could not be adjusted in a spirit of mutual confidence and trust. This meeting was followed by a visit of two of our men—Dr. E. Stanley Jones, and Dr. J. R. Chitambar—as fraternal delegates to the General Assembly of the United Church of Northern India which met last December in Lahore. This body was so inspired by the addresses and spirit of these two visitors that it was moved to draw up a proposal addressed to our Methodist Episcopal Church asking that steps be taken as early as possible to arrange for negotiation for and the consummation of Union between our two Churches.

So far, a suitable date has not been found for the holding of a meeting of the Commissions on Union of the two Churches, but it is hoped that a meeting will be held this autumn, so that the results of such a joint gathering may be ready for presentation to our Methodist Central Conference which meets in Cawnpore the last of December, and the early part of January, 1931.'

It will thus be seen that the Methodist Episcopal Church is not adopting an exclusive and self-satisfied position . . . but on the other hand it is making an earnest study of the situation, and is seeking to find out by every means at its disposal what is the very best thing for it to do in relation to this vital and important subject.

Now there are certain peculiar difficulties which beset us, and I doubt if these are either well or clearly understood by those who are inclined to feel that we Methodist Episcopals are the most difficult of all to deal with in the matter of Union. If these were more clearly perceived, perhaps we should be less the object of criticism. I shall, therefore, try to state some of the things which make it difficult for us at the present stage to consummate Union.

1. In the first place, unlike the Presbyterian, the Congregational and the Church of England bodies in India, ours is not an independent Church in India. It is, on the other hand, a part of the world-wide Methodist Episcopal Church organization. In order to provide for Union we would first of all have to convince, not only our Indian constituency, but also the American part of our Church as well, that the cause of Christ can best be served at the present by separation from this world-wide organization for

the sake of Union. Up to the present, I am frank to say, that we have not made up our minds on this important question. But our minds are open. They are not closed, and one of the Commissions of our General Conference in America, as well as the Commission on Church Union out here, is engaged in the study of this question in a serious manner. The very fact that both in Mexico and Korea and Japan our General Conference has not stood in the way of union when the cause of Christ could best be served by allowing our Church in those countries to unite with others, is a sufficient guarantee that when the time is ripe, we shall find no hindrance put in our way in India either.

2. In the second place, our form of government creates a difficulty. The Anglicans apparently find no way in which they can concede parity between our bishops and their bishops. It is true that we put the emphasis in different places: we on the *practical function* of the bishop, they on the *'historic' connection*. We hold that it is the function coupled with spiritual gifts that determine the value of the episcopacy. They insist that the 'historic' connection in the episcopacy is the primary consideration, other things being equal. It is quite apparent that these are incompatible views . . . but, if one wishes to know why we hold them as we do, let him read the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. It is this history connected with the development of a great country of which we have been so much a part that makes us very conservative about altering our modes of thought and deep convictions. It is this which makes it more difficult for us than for Presbyterians and Congregationalists of South India to accept the conclusions of the South India Scheme of Union. I spoke of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists of *South* India advisedly, because there are some who feel that we Methodist Episcopals stand in a class by ourselves everywhere. I hardly think this is correct, judging from the findings of the Landour Conference last June, and also considering the editorial on 'The Idea of the Church and the Historic Episcopate' from the pen of an ardent Presbyterian in the September number of *The United Church Review* which is the official organ of the United Church of Northern India.

3. Another difficulty comes as a corollary to the second. It is the problem of the validity of the ministry and the sacraments. We are prepared to consider union with any Church which recognizes the equal validity of our ministry and of our sacraments with its own. So far as I am able to interpret the sentiment of our Church, it is not prepared to negotiate on any other basis, nor to accept any compromise which would do violence to its sense of what is right and in accordance with our understanding of the spirit and purpose of our Master Christ, and we are convinced that no one would wish us to do so. Unless and until we are

convinced that union is of greater importance to the cause of Christ than our present convictions in respect of the validity of our ministry we shall, for conscience' sake, have to pursue our present course.

Within the limits indicated above we are prepared to proceed toward union, and I shall be greatly surprised if, at our next Central Conference which meets in December, action is not taken which will take us not only one step, but several steps farther than we now are toward union with the United Church of Northern India.

MURRAY T. TITUS.

Conference on Church Union at Secunderabad

Tuesday, August 26.—A United service was held at St. Thomas' Church at which two Wesleyan ministers took part. The preacher Rev. E. Priestley, a Wesleyan, gave an inspiring address on the words 'Let there be no divisions among you' in which he enunciated the underlying principles of Church Union.

Wednesday, August 27.—Devotions were led by Rev. S. S. Subbiah. Speaking on Unity he showed how the bits of a broken mirror reflected only bits of the complete image that an unbroken mirror would show.

SESSION I

History of the Movement towards Church Union

Rev. H. Sumitra gave a lucid account of the history of the movement. The name S.I.U.C. was first given in 1901 to a union of three Presbyterian bodies and a parallel union of Congregational bodies joined with them in 1908. Soon after the historic conference at Tranquebar, the Anglicans and later, the Wesleyans joined in the negotiations for Union. Ten years later they published as the fruits of their labours the Proposed Scheme of Union. Mr. Sumitra gave the Conference a clear impression of the Joint Committee's sense of the overruling influence of the Holy Spirit. Several times the Committee seemed to have reached a deadlock and were on the point of giving up their quest, but they were obviously led to persevere. They finished up eventually with the conviction that a way of organic union would be found.

Nature of Proposed Union

Rev. P. B. Emmet insisted that Federation will not do; organic union is the ideal for the living Body of Christ. The right union will be

comprehensive bringing in the differing gifts and contributions of the now separate churches. It will also be *educative*. Already in the Joint Committee they had had 'the eyes of their hearts enlightened'.

SESSION 2

Difficulties in the Way of Union

Speaking in the name of a number of ministers of the Hyderabad District, Rev. E. L. Ananta Rao voiced his doubts and fears as to organic union, mainly with the Anglican Church in view. He felt that Episcopacy would jeopardize the brotherly relations which now exist in the Wesleyan Church, was afraid of absorption into a community having sacerdotal tendencies and declared that the critical condition of the work in Hyderabad made any change of organization undesirable at present. Subsequent speakers tried to clear up these doubts; inter-communion was shown to be increasingly the desire and practice of Anglicans; a Wesleyan delegate of long experience said that wider and not less sympathy from the Mother Churches would result from Union. One speaker argued that the objections urged against Union were really reasons *for* Union if viewed rightly.

Rev. W. D. Simeon voiced from an Anglican point of view his fears of the loss of some cherished possessions. But he qualified these difficulties and there was little discussion on them.

Rev. E. F. Gurney thought that the Congregational emphasis on liberty had not been given due weight in the negotiations.

SESSION 3

Open Session to allow for further exposition of the subjects already discussed

The opposition already expressed to Organic Union led Rev. H. Sumitra to argue for this as against Federal Union. This latter we already have in the N.C.C., Union Institutions, etc., but that is not enough. In this connection some weighty words of Rev. W. Paton found in the last number of *Church Union News and Views* were several times quoted.

Continuing the argument Rev. C. H. Monahan said that Federation standardized our divisions. We find as a matter of history, that movements towards Union develop first in the younger churches. Rev. P. B. Emmet showed that only Organic Union can meet the present overlapping and lack of efficiency and vital power due to our multiplied denominations.

Thursday, August 28.—Rev. M. Gnanaprakasam conducted Devotions using the Continuation Committee's special form of intercession. He urged us to see to it that in all our religiousness, Christ Himself must be the beginning and the end.

SESSION 4

The Ministry of the United Church

Mr. Monahan reminded us of the true meaning of 'ministry' that we so easily lose sight of. Our Lord founded an organization and the ministry is His *gift* in order to train and lead men and women in the ministerial work which pertains to every member of the Church. The ministry ought to make for united, visible and authoritative fellowship. For a visible unity there must be corporate acts, performed by representatives whom all recognize. The Joint Committee only asks us to recognize the fact of the ancient Episcopate. The institution of episcopacy has proved in crises of Church History to be most useful in unifying the Church and preserving it from disintegration.

Rev. L. O. R. Joseph said that in view of the Holy Spirit's manifest blessing on the Churches, none of us could question the validity of their Orders. Quoting the constitution of the Church in India, Burma and Ceylon, he showed that the Anglican conception was that the Bishop was primarily a Father in God and he brought out the constitutional nature of the Episcopate found in the proposed Scheme. In reply to the question 'Is episcopacy of the *esse* or of the *bene esse* of the Church'?, the opinion of Rev. P. B. Emmet was that, from the Lambeth Conference of 1920, the Anglican position has been 'it is of the *bene esse*'.

On Thursday evening simultaneous public meetings were held in Secunderabad and Hyderabad. At the former the local Anglican Pastor presided. Mr. V. D. Chellappa (District Judge and keen member of our Conference) emphasized the practical need for the small community of Indian Christians to be united, surrounded as they were by non-Christians. Mr. Sumitra said that the question 'Why should we unite'? should be answered by another question, 'Why should we be divided?' Appealing especially to Indians he pointed out that the Western denominational classifications are for them only accidents; one in race and culture, let them be one in Christ and so make their best contribution to the Universal Church. Mr. Monahan, while absolving his hearers from the responsibility for making divisions, insisted that they *are* responsible for continuing in them. Such divisions result in weakness and scandal. We all meet at the Cross; let us bear anything—even a cross of organization for the sake of the peace we find there.

Friday, August 29.—In our Devotional Service Rev. S. Z. Devadattu spoke on the many gifts but the one Spirit.

SESSION 5

Faith and Worship of the United Church

Rev. K. Philip mainly followed the proposed Scheme. Visible unity and its expression are needed in our faith and worship.

Mr. Sumitra stressed the usefulness of a Creed as a symbol of our one Faith. He said that we may rightly, without any anti-foreign bias, look for indigenous types of worship to develop. Mr. Emmet underlined the paragraph in the Report in which it is pointed out that the use of the Creed may be a helpful act of devotion.

The Government of the United Church

Rev. F. Whittaker explained, mainly for Wesleyan delegates, the meaning of the unfamiliar terms used in the Scheme and showed how little change from the present organization is involved. He pleaded that the Church organization into which our new converts are brought should have as little trace as possible of 'our unhappy divisions'.

Mr. Emmet appealed to Scripture as the basis of this part of the Scheme and said that the veto of the Bishop was to be exercised only to prevent wrong local handling of matters that concern the whole Church.

SESSION 6

Relations of the United Church with the main Bodies to which the Uniting Churches belong

Rev. A. B. Elliot urged that such relations should be generous, curtailing no liberties enjoyed; aiming only at enrichment. We should seek the Union with Churches who have not yet entered into negotiations, and we should be patient of their criticisms. Mr. Monahan suggested that the Methodist Conference might modify its disciplinary powers in the case of its ministers who belong to the United Church and forecasted the possibility of missionaries newly appointed to South India being ordained in India.

Episcopacy in India

By Rev. A. J. APPASAMY, M.A., D. PHIL.

An interesting editorial entitled 'Keep the Episcopal Church In!' has appeared in the *Christian Century* of July 23rd. After speaking of the great difficulties in the way of Union between the Protestant Churches on the one hand and the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church on the other, the article points out that between the Anglican Church and the Free Churches there is much affinity and that Union between these is not difficult of achievement. When speaking of Union the Free Churches should not only consider the possibility of their coming together but must also 'Keep the Episcopal Church In'. Having pleaded for this outlook the editorial goes on to say:

'The time is ripe for Episcopalians to set forth the merits of episcopacy, to show its advantages over Presbyterian and Congregational systems. The *Christian Century* is not an organ of episcopacy or any other denominational interest, but if we were put to it we could, in all modesty, present an apologetic for the episcopal system, or at least raise certain questions concerning it, in comparison with other systems, that would cause the minds of some non-Episcopal Churchmen to view it in a new light and with a not wholly unfavourable presumption. Why do not Episcopalians themselves develop such an apologetic for episcopacy?'

The question which the *Christian Century* asks here is quite a reasonable one. And those of us who are pleading for giving a place to episcopacy in 'The Proposed Scheme of Union' should be prepared to answer the question in all seriousness. Leaving aside for the moment all controversial matters like the meaning of Apostolic Succession, the advocates of 'The Proposed Scheme' should show on grounds of common sense and reason and of the history and heritage of the people of India that episcopacy is indeed the best form of government for the Indian Church.

It will be noticed that the *Christian Century* asks the Episcopalians to develop an apologetic for episcopacy. Sometimes it is said that it is natural for Episcopalians to defend episcopacy or to advocate it. They have been brought up on that tradition and it is easy for them to speak highly of it. Therefore anything that an Episcopalian says on behalf of episcopacy is discounted. It is pointed out that it is but natural for him to speak in this way. This criticism should be considered in some detail. Who are the people to write about episcopacy? Those who have been brought up on that tradition or those who have been brought up on other

traditions? While the objection may be made that those who are members of Episcopalian Churches are apt to extol their method of Church government, the even more serious objection may be urged against the others that they know nothing of that tradition. As between Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians, who are the best fitted to speak about episcopacy? It cannot be said that non-Episcopalians are the best fitted, for by their own training and experience they have no intimate knowledge of episcopacy and all that they say must come from a surface knowledge. The Episcopalians, then, are the best fitted for they know that method of Church government from the inside, and while their eyes are open to see the value of episcopacy, it is quite probable that they have also found out at what points the system is defective. They know both the value and the defects of episcopacy and provided they are prepared to acknowledge both frankly, their account of episcopacy must carry some authority. What they say about episcopacy cannot be dismissed lightly as coming from people who are used to the tradition. Who else could speak with weight on the subject but they?

I

The Indian Church to-day is going through an important stage of its development. There are now all over India thousands of Christians of the second and third generation who have passed over the initial difficulties of leaving one religion and joining another. They have now come to the point where a process of intensive spiritual life and culture must begin. The Indian Church can no longer rest content with pointing to the accessions in strength to her ranks but must be able to show how the people who have been gathered together are daily progressing in their life with God and are carrying on in the world their task of spreading His Kingdom. There are several urgent needs to-day clamouring for attention in the Indian Church.

Of these needs the first and foremost is the need for outstanding spiritual leaders. What the Indian Church needs now is not necessarily more churches, more schools and colleges, more hospitals, more social work centres or more books. But it needs deeply spiritual men and women. When these deeply spiritual men and women arise, they will use the already existing churches, schools and colleges, hospitals, social centres and books with a new effectiveness and also add to them in great numbers. The supreme need of the day, then, is for men of devotion and earnestness. Such men will, because of the Holy Spirit who works through them, raise the spiritual level of the country to new altitudes. Then the life of the Church will not stagnate but will be stirred with new enthusiasms and new

activities. These activities will bear rich fruit. Such spiritual leaders will be men of varied gifts. Some of them will be of outstanding power and others will be men unknown to fame but working away in their humble spheres and making effective in the hearts of men the good news of the redeeming love of Christ. In that interesting book *The Christian Leaders of England in the Eighteenth Century,* Bishop Ryle points out what an enormous change was produced in the religious and moral condition of England in the eighteenth century by a band of devoted Christian ministers and workers. Among these George Whitefield and John Wesley were men of pre-eminent spiritual power and their work reached men by the thousands. There were others like William Grimshaw, William Romaine, Daniel Rowlands, John Berridge, Henry Venn, Walker, James Harvey, Toplady and Fletcher. These men wrought a profound revolution in the spiritual life of England. They are not well known in modern times but they were all devoted lovers of Christ and fervent ministers of the Gospel. Their work in various parishes and churches, under the providence of God, awoke a new spiritual life all over England.

Another pressing need in the Indian Church is to make her worship meaningful and significant. The forms of worship which are being followed to-day in India have been brought into the country by Churches from the West and it is felt by many that they have not availed themselves of the spiritual resources in the country. If worship is to be effective, it must kindle the deepest feelings of the people and arouse in them the fullest response. In this matter several experiments have to be made. New services have to be evolved and their fitness for the people tested. Prayers have to be specially written for India, setting forth the needs of the congregations in words which they can fully follow. Hymns have to be sung by Indian poets giving expression to experiences which have profoundly moved them. Such hymns will help people more than hymns translated from other languages and embodying unfamiliar experiences. The rites and ceremonies which are being followed in the Indian Church have to be recognized so that the natural characteristics of the people will find in them a real outlet. Some of the present ceremonies and rites may have to be omitted, others modified to suit the peculiar conditions of India, and yet others evolved for expressing in new ways the strong religious emotions and experiences of the people. Only when worship in India is thus adjusted to suit the inherent traits of Christians in India, will it enable them to put into it their heartiest.

In the matter of doctrine too considerable restatement is necessary. It is no use expecting the members of the Indian Church to understand and use with their full hearts doctrines which were formulated centuries ago. There are certain fundamental experiences which lie at the basis of

the Christian religion and are set forth in the Creeds. These form the core of Christian thought. But this body of doctrine is constantly being examined and added to. New light is being thrown on it from different angles and as a result, a new understanding of its meaning becomes possible. Doctrine is but the attempt to clothe in words the experiences which take place in the inner *ātman* and changes from age to age and from country to country. These experiences, while agreeing on certain fundamentals, are continually changing. The formulas which set forth in theological language the experiences themselves, should also change. Otherwise doctrine will be a dead incubus, only oppressing the heart by its formal character and not helping it in any way. But if doctrine continues to be the effective setting forth, in the changing words and ideas of every new generation, of the experiences which are most real to it, then it will cease to be mechanical and will wield a vitalizing influence in the life of the soul. Thus freed from the trammels of doctrines which no longer count, men will be in a position to enter more fully into the riches of the life hid in Christ.

These, then, are the three great needs of the Indian Church to-day: the need for devoted ministers who would help the people to live close to Christ, the need for worship which will enable them to pour out their heart in adoration and prayer, and the need for doctrine which will help them to set forth effectively and clearly the ideas which lie at the root of their genuine Christian experience.

It is proposed in the new united Church of South India that all these three needs should in a special manner be dealt with by Bishops in consultation with Church bodies.

With regard to the first need, 'the Proposed Scheme' says: 'The bishop of the diocese has the general pastoral oversight of all Christian people of the diocese, and more particularly of the ministers of the Church of the diocese.'[1]

In the matter of worship, too, the Bishop is given considerable powers which he exercises in consultation with Church bodies. 'The bishop of the diocese, acting in accordance with the rules laid down in this Constitution concerning the worship of the Church, shall acquaint himself with the various methods of worship and forms of service used in the diocese, shall advise the ministers and congregations in this matter and shall cause to be prepared and shall issue special services and prayers as they may be required from time to time.'[2]

Again, in regard to propositions of faith and doctrine, the bishops have both in the Diocesan Council and in the Synod considerable voice.

[1] *Proposed Scheme of Union*, p. 18. [2] *Ibid.*

For instance, their powers in the Synod are thus set forth: 'When any proposition (in which term are included proposed enactments, statements and resolutions, and also forms of public worship) is brought before the Synod which directly concerns

(*a*) the faith and doctrine of the Church,
(*b*) the conditions of membership in the Church,
(*c*) the functions of the ordained ministers of the Church, or
(*d*) the worship of the Church, and any forms of worship proposed for general use in the Church,

the matter shall be discussed in the Synod in the usual manner, but the proposition shall be submitted to the Synod for final voting thereon only in a form approved by the bishops sitting separately for that purpose.'[1]

By a wise provision in the Scheme, bishops are relieved of all financial responsibility. This leaves them entirely free for spiritual work.

II

From the above, the urgent needs of the Indian Church and the way in which these needs are to be met by the bishops, are clear. It may now be asked why such large powers are assigned to the bishops and whether it is better that they should be so assigned to them in preference to their being given to Presbyteries on the one hand and congregations on the other. Is it wise to give so many powers to the bishops?

The reasons for allowing such large ranges of influence and authority to the bishops may be thus explained:

(1) A Bishop is well equipped for his task. Every endeavour is made in the Church to elect and appoint persons to that high office who are felt to be equipped for their responsible duties by their long experience, sound judgment, deep learning and fervent piety: only men exceptionally endowed in intellect and in spirit are chosen. All the bishops do not have a goodly measure of these great qualities. Some excel in one and others in another.

Dean Inge in an article on the Lambeth Conference which met ten years ago—I am writing from memory—spoke of the majority of the Colonial Bishops as being men of second-rate ability who swamped the Conference and made it insist on episcopacy as one of the essential conditions of re-union. Only men who know all the Colonial Bishops can with authority either confirm or deny the Dean's general statement. But if it be true, it can only be because there are no first-rate men available. In every sphere of life it will be found that there are several jobs demanding

[1] *Proposed Scheme of Union*, p. 34.

great qualities of head and heart, but that there are not enough men to fill these jobs. On the whole it is safe to say that where bishops are elected, they will be chosen from among those who are felt by those concerned to be the most fitted by their intellectual and spiritual endowment to hold the office.

(2) A bishop devotes his whole time to this work. He is not immersed in parish duties as Presbyters are likely to be. He is not immersed in his studies as theological professors are likely to be. He is not wholly occupied with meetings as evangelists are likely to be. Nor is his time planned out from day to day and from hour to hour in the same way as the time of busy social workers is planned out. He is by choice left free for the general duties of supervision and control. These duties are, of course, heavy and responsible. But he is not so preoccupied with minute details in any one department of religious activity that he has no time for dealing with the general matters. He is set apart for helping the life of the Church as a whole. There may be in his diocese men who know more about some particular phase of Christian thought or life, but there is probably no one who has the grasp of the entire situation which he has.

(3) He travels over the whole diocese and by visiting the different churches has an understanding of the problems and difficulties of a large area. In the former paragraph it was pointed out that he has a grasp of different phases of Christian work. In this paragraph it is being pointed out that he has a grasp of Christian work not only in one place but over a big territory. This understanding of the situation, as it exists in different parishes and in different congregations, gives him a breadth of outlook. Because he is in touch with several places and sees how things are getting on at different centres, his view-point is liberal for he is dealing all the time with diverse experiences. It is often only the man who is absorbed in one task who has the narrow vision and the stagnant mind.

(4) As authoritative representatives of the Church the Bishops are to be in contact with the Synod in which delegates representing every section of the United Church will come together. And they are also to attend the great Church assemblies which meet in the other parts of the world.

'They hope that invitations to the Lambeth Conference may be extended to the bishops of the United Church, and that those bishops will whenever possible accept such invitations; and that similarly affiliations with, or membership in, the World Presbyterian Alliance, the World Union of Congregational Churches and the Ecumenical Methodist Conference may be granted to the united Church, and that it will whenever possible send delegates to the meetings of those bodies.'[1] These delegates will, in all probability, be mostly Bishops. In this way they have wonderful oppor-

[1] *Proposed Scheme of Union*, pp. 8–9.

tunities for gaining glimpses of the life of the Christian Church as a whole. All this understanding and knowledge will be of use to their dioceses.

(5) A Bishop brings, above all, the personal touch into Church life. This point needs to be fully realized. So much responsibility is given to the Bishops because the personal touch counts a great deal in religion. In India especially, where the relation between the religious teacher and his disciples is intimate, this point of view will readily be seen. All deeply religious experience is communicated from man to man. The old saints and seers of India understood this profound psychological fact when they laid down that personality should be the basis of religious teaching. The religious literature of India is full of the recognition of the value of personal guidance and personal help in religion. Again and again it is clearly felt or stated that genuine religious experience is possible only under the direction of a spiritually-minded preceptor. Let us take a book recently published, entitled *Stotramala*. It contains poems from many Maratha authors done into English by that veteran scholar, Dr. J. E. Abbott. In this book there are several references to the value of personal help in religion and to the function of saintly people in the progress of the spiritual life. Three or four stanzas may be quoted here which give expression to the influence of saints in the lives of *bhaktas*. Ramdas sings:

'Thou didst always meet with those loved ones.
By seeing Thee, by touching Thee, they became a mass of goodness.
But I, intoxicated by pride, and by a knowledge consisting of mere words, am lost.
I, Thy servant, have lived a life of no value.
Many servants of Thy love have been born,
Innumerable in number they sang Thy praises and then passed away.
I am amazed at their great and noble courage,
But I, Thy servant, have lived a life of no value.' (p. 51.)

At the close of his commentary on *Bhagavad Gita*, Dnyandev has put in this beautiful prayer:

'May these moons without dark spots,
May these suns without fierce heat,
May all these ever good men,
Be the close kin of mankind.
And now in every form of happiness.
May there be enjoyment to the full everywhere,
And may the Supreme Being be worshipped
For ever and ever.' (p. 181)

These quotations show the depth of conviction in the Indian mind that religious teachers have a great deal to contribute by their personal influence to the spread of deep spirituality.

The doctrine of episcopacy rests ultimately on the recognition of the value of personality. It is because men know that great and saintly souls must be trusted and followed that they have been given such powers. No presbytery or congregation can be composed of men who all have high intellectual and spiritual attainments. Their attainments will be varied and their voice not always be unanimous. They cannot all speak with the same authority. No presbytery or congregation can maintain the personal touch. It is impossible for any group of people to maintain the personal touch as that can only be kept in the relation between individuals. Episcopacy makes possible the coming together of religious teachers in an intimate way for guidance and help from one whom they acknowledge as their leader. From this personal loyalty arise certain benefits, the value of which no one can question.

It may be said that no Bishop can really keep in effective personal contact with all the Christian workers in his diocese; there are too many of them. While this may be true, he sees to it that he keeps in effective contact with at least the strategic men.

III

To all this it may be objected, in the first place, that such functions may be exercised by Bishops, but why call them Bishops? Call them *Gurus, Swamis, Mahants* or anything else you like, but not Bishops. This criticism needs only to be stated and its obvious rise from prejudice is evident. Some Bishops have not been acceptable and for that reason their very name is criticized. The main thing, of course, is that certain individuals should exercise the kind of powers which have been given them in the Scheme. As to whether they are called Bishops or by some other name is a matter of no great consequence. But if the Indian Church is to feel its kinship with the other churches of the West, it would do well to retain this time-honoured name. In assemblies of Christians gathered together from different parts of the world, a common designation is a great help. It is perfectly possible that Bishops in India will develop their own traditions just as the Anglican Bishops now have their special traditions. The Bishops of the Anglican Church are different in their own outlook, their way of life and their equipment from the Bishops of the Roman Church or of the Greek Church. But they exercise more or less similar functions and carry the same well-understood name.

Again, it has been objected that all I have said above about personality and the respect naturally given to personality does not hold true, for bishops exercise authority not because they are personally endowed but because they hold a certain office. They are held in respect, and weight is attached to

their words because they hold the office. But how does a man become a bishop? Not because he is born in a particular family or belongs to a particular caste, but because he has been found worthy of the office. He is chosen for personal reasons of ability and saintliness and the fact that he holds office gives him additional respect. But it should not be forgotten that he comes to hold office at all because he has been found to be specially fitted for it.

A fear is seriously felt that Bishops may turn out to be autocrats. A careful attempt is made in the Scheme to graft on to episcopacy all the valuable elements in Presbyterianism and Congregationalism and a bishop works in spheres whose limits are carefully guarded by Presbyterian and Congregational influences. In a limited sphere it is true he is given much freedom. Suppose he abuses this freedom and exercises too much authority. This is a risk which we must take if we believe in personal influence. Persons are of different types; one rules firmly and another with love; one is tactful and another plain-spoken. Provided the good of the diocese is maintained, we can put up with such idiosyncracies.

There is one other objection, which can be dealt with only briefly, though it is a very important objection. It is perfectly true that the old Indian tradition is all in favour of personal influence and guidance in religion but we are getting away from it now. India is at the cross-roads of democracy. Into every field of her activity democratic influences are coming. Under these circumstances is it possible to go back again to the old ideal in which considerable place was given to individual men? All students of 'the Scheme' will have noted that every endeavour is made to adapt the institution of episcopacy to modern conditions. The Bishop is to work under a Constitution and in consultation with various Church bodies. His work is not all done by himself but is done in co-operation with other Christians. Speaking of democracy, it must be pointed out that even groups of people are ultimately controlled by certain leading men. Groups of men, large or small, reflect the ideas of certain individuals. Here again we come back to personality. No Synod, Presbytery or Congregation runs itself; it is run by certain individuals, men of intellectual and spiritual gifts, who command the respect of their fellowmen.

All this is humanly speaking. In this paper an effort has been made to set forth the claims of episcopacy on the grounds of the special conditions in India. The facts to which reference has been made are such that they will probably be accepted by all. But, of course, some of us believe that this question should not be discussed merely on this level. It is our conviction that the Bishops who are prayerfully chosen by the Church are invested from on high with special spiritual power and that their natural gifts are thereby reinforced, enabling them to fulfil the heavy and manifold tasks assigned to them.

Proposed Scheme of Church Union in South India

REPLY

TO

questions with reference to the above addressed to the Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland by the Madras Mission Council, and remitted by the General Assembly in May, 1930, to a special Committee consisting of twelve representatives of the *Foreign Mission Committee,* twelve representatives of the *Committee on Relations with other Churches,* and twelve members appointed *ad hoc* by the General Assembly, with instructions

'to watch over the progress of the negotiations, to give such guidance to the Madras Mission Council as they may find possible, and to report further to next General Assembly.'

The Committee desire, at the outset, to express the profound and sympathetic interest with which they have studied the Proposed Scheme of Union which has been laid before them. With others they are alive to the pathos of the reproduction on the Mission Field of the divisions of our Western Christianity; and, in their belief, no more devoutly conceived or courageous expression has yet been given to the sentiment in favour of Unity so widely prevalent throughout Christendom at this hour. The Scheme breathes the spirit of a large catholicity : also it aims at the removal of what, in the experience of those who are promoting it, has proved a grievous practical hindrance in the way of the spread of the Gospel. In such circumstances Church Union becomes urgent. And all must earnestly desire to see, as the fruit of these patient endeavours, an organization of the Christian Church in South India ultimately attained which, in the language here employed, 'shall give the Indian expression of the spirit, the thought, and the life of the Church Universal' and serve for the more speedy and effective establishment of Christ's Kingdom on earth.

Again, the Committee do not forget that the South India United Church, through which the Church of Scotland is more especially brought into contact with this movement, is a fully-constituted and autonomous Communion, with the ordering of whose life and progress no other may interfere. The decision it will take in this matter, and the responsibility for such decision, must be its own. Very early in its history, however, that Church has had thrust upon it the duty of taking part in a negotiation of a novel and extremely important kind, the outcome of which must have far-reaching consequences for the Churches of the Reformation everywhere; and the Committee appreciate the motives which have led the Madras Mission Council to consult others who ought to be able to take a more detached view of what is in contemplation even although their own interests are to some extent involved. At the same time, the Council will observe that in what follows it is not the Church of Scotland that speaks—considerations of time alone have precluded the possibility of preparing an authoritative Church pronouncement. Only to a few representatives has been entrusted the task of offering such counsel as they can, upon

certain features of the present proposals which have been felt to occasion hesitation or misgiving.

1. The Scheme as drafted is an elaborate and complicated one, and the Committee trust they are right in assuming that in the *Queries* submitted to them only leading issues, which have occasioned difficulty for the negotiating Churches in the past, are intended to be dealt with. Neither Creed nor Worship, accordingly, nor, still less, subordinate details of the organization proposed, need be touched on now. The polity suggested for the united Church, and in particular the bold attempt to harmonize an Episcopal with a non-Episcopal system of Church life and government, are what give to the Scheme its peculiarity and significance; and to these the Committee confine themselves.

2. This all-important topic is dealt with in Section III. (*vide* B, p. 4.)

2 (*a*) The Committee, at this point, cannot but express their regret at finding the term 'the historic episcopate' made use of here. The expression is an ambiguous one, and its introduction into the very foundation of the united Church would seem to be unfortunate. The Committee appreciate the intention that the Church shall embrace all parties, from those who regard Episcopacy merely as a form of Church organization long and widely prevalent, to be adopted or not according to circumstances, to others who take it to be part of the substantial deposit of Faith and Order committed by Christ and His Apostles to the Church unto the end of the world, and therefore incapable of compromise or surrender. But nothing less than this second interpretation is often connoted in the use of the term itself—on which view the acceptance of 'the historic episcopate' would involve assent to the doctrine just indicated. That, however, cannot be intended: it is fundamental to the Scheme that no one shall be required to accept any particular theory of the office. The acceptance of a *de facto* episcopate is all that, in accordance with the whole conditions of the negotiation between the Churches, can be asked for. And while, as it seems to us, this might have been expressed more clearly, the really important question concerns the character which it is proposed that the office shall possess.

3. The *Status and Functions* of the Bishop are set forth in the constitution in various sections and paragraphs which see.

4. While the features indicate the character of the Episcopate under the outline as printed (in 1929), the Committee realize that in all its parts the Scheme is open to amendment, and that amendments are still forthcoming. Of those suggested for consideration by the General Assembly of the South India United Church in October last, the more important are as follows:—

(1) That Section III (B) para. 1 read 'The uniting Churches accept in particular the historic Episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union. *In so doing they declare their intention that no particular theory regarding Episcopacy shall become the official doctrine of the united Church; and they do not commit themselves to the position that Episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a valid and an invalid ministry.*'

(2) *That Presbyters shall take part along with bishops in all episcopal consecrations.*

(3) *That no Minister of the united Church shall be restrained from inviting to the Lord's Table members of other Churches who are communicants in good standing.*

(4) *That any matter in regard to which the bishops have stayed action as in Section VIII (C) (7) shall be dealt with in accordance with the principles laid down in Section XIII (A).*

The adoption of these amendments would undoubtedly render the Schemes more acceptable from the Presbyterian point of view. The Committee also attach value to the observation that union of the Presbyterian, Anglican and Wesleyan Churches can only be secured *on a basis of mutual toleration and respect, and not by attempting to secure uniformity*. The anxious desire to respect the rights of those who hold office or membership in the uniting Churches at the time of Union is written all over the documents. But if, in addition to this, the words quoted are to be taken to imply that union must be based on the *permanent* and equal recognition of the principles and ordinances of the several Churches, the admission of such a claim would at once remove many uncertainties.

5. With regard to the general topic of the Episcopate as here conceived, the Committee recall how it is the intention and hope of the uniting Churches that, so far from disturbing existing fellowships, the Union contemplated shall broaden these and serve to point the way towards the final goal of Catholic unity in Christ. Thus, affiliation with the World Presbyterian Alliance is hoped for—as with the other World-bodies to which the several negotiating Churches belong. But this is a matter for the Alliance itself to determine, and the Committee cannot anticipate its decision. Among the Churches embraced within the Alliance the office of bishop is not unknown; but in such cases the bishop is strictly *primus inter pares*, one who is responsible to the body appointing him, and whose status remains that of a teaching Presbyter. But new questions would arise were a Church constituted according to the proposed Scheme to seek to be affiliated to the Alliance; and until the Alliance has pronounced upon these questions, a Church which is one of its members must necessarily exercise reserve in offering an opinion.

6. To come now to the *Queries* submitted by the Madras Mission Council: it is obvious that the remark just made bears immediately upon the answer to be given to the *first* of these.

> 1. Is the proposed United Church such as will permit the Home Church to maintain the same intimate relationship with it, as it at present maintains with the present South India United Church?

Only a provisional answer is at present possible. Reserving for the next paragraph what suggests itself with reference to the more specific relation of individuals and agencies to the United Church and speaking now of ecclesiastical relations generally, it need hardly be said that the Church of Scotland would desire to maintain fraternal relations with the newly formed Communion as a duly constituted branch of the Catholic Church of Christ. It would seem to be in accordance with present-day sentiment that closer fellowship should be maintained among all Churches which are at once Catholic and Evangelical, whatever the differences in respect of polity among them may be; the present Scheme represents the most serious effort yet made to overcome the most outstanding difference of the kind that serves to divide Christians from one another; and, apart altogether from its effect as a precedent in the matter of Union to be followed elsewhere, the ultimate realization of the Scheme may well foster the creation of friendlier ties between Episcopal and non-Episcopal

Communions everywhere. In any case the Committee feel assured that the earnest wish of the Church of Scotland would be that the general relations now subsisting between herself and the South India United Church should be continued with the future United Church, and should become increasingly warm and close.

The *second Query*, however, is by no means so easy to answer.

> 2. Is the proposed United Church such as will make it possible for the missionaries of the Home Church to accept the invitation extended to them in the scheme to exercise their ministry in that Church, it being stipulated that they must give 'the same assent to the Basis of Union and the same promise to accept the Constitution of the United Church as will be required from persons about to be ordained or employed for the first time in that Church'?

With the financial aspects of the question it is unnecessary perhaps, at this stage, to deal. The essential matter concerns those who are sent out and supported by the Home Church and the consequences of any change in their status which may be effected by what is now proposed. Under existing conditions certain ordained Missionaries are full members of the courts of the South India United Church, and the proposal is that, provided they assent to its Basis of Union and accept its Constitution, they shall be acknowledged similarly, and shall serve, as Ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments in the United Church (Section III, (C) (1)), while *quoad ultra* the general constitutional provisions, as to the Ministry and all else, shall be as outlined above. On these terms, can 'the same intimate relationship' which is at present maintained with the South India United Church be carried over to the new situation by the Church of Scotland?

A point not made entirely plain here, is worth notice in passing. Under existing conditions missionaries sent out and maintained by the Church of Scotland are under the jurisdiction not of the South India United Church, but of the Church at home. The provision would appear to be a temporary one. But the Committee are uncertain whether they are to assume that its reappearance in the constitution and working of the United Church (Section IV, (B) (4)) is intended to apply to missionaries sent out in future as well as to those serving now.

For the rest, the Query is in the first place one for the missionaries concerned to reckon with. No Church of Scotland Missionary is asked to submit to re-ordination: he is acknowledged as a Minister in full standing as aforesaid, it being stipulated that those only need accept his ministrations who feel free to do so. On these terms can he conscientiously give his assent to the Basis of Union and the Constitution as outlined? It is for each to say. The Committee have no knowledge of how the individual missionaries of their Church regard the matter, nor is it for them to seek to influence their decision.

With reference to the attitude of the Church on this whole crucial question, however, the Committee shrink from the responsibility of seeming to pronounce upon it dogmatically, and add what commends itself to them with all due deference. One thing is sufficiently clear. With much that is associated with the Episcopal office in the Scheme no Presbyterian need have any quarrel. It might be a novelty to have various of the functions

set forth in No. 3 above discharged not by a court of Presbyters but by the Bishop; but the preferences of others might legitimately be allowed to determine the matter, not to add that in the circumstances of the South Indian Church there may conceivably be independent grounds, connected with the *bene esse* of that Church, justifying such an arrangement. On the other hand, the multiplied prerogatives reserved here for the Bishop alone can scarcely but occasion difficulty. Thus, the place assigned to him as regards Worship and the exercise of Discipline is already suggestive of a view of the episcopate as the seat of authority which is alien to Presbyterian principles. Still more is this the case with regard to the powers with which the bishops are invested, whether singly or more especially as a body, in the framing of the Church's determinations on *Faith, Worship,* the *Ministry,* and the *Conditions of Church Membership*—indeed it is not easy to reconcile these last with the unqualified supremacy 'in all matters pertaining to the Church' ascribed to the Synod elsewhere. And in particular, with reference to Ministerial Orders the positions laid down in the Scheme are such as, the Committee apprehend, cannot but arouse grave questioning.

Referring to this cardinal topic the General Assembly of the South India United Church, as quoted above, say that they 'do not commit themselves to the position that episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a valid and an invalid ministry'. The matter, however, may be put more positively. On Presbyterian principles, ordination at the hands of the Presbytery is full and valid New Testament ordination: also, no office is recognized in the Church of Christ higher than that of the teaching or preaching Presbyter thus ordained; and those who hold such principles cannot be expected readily to assent to anything that might seem to jeopardize or bring them into question.

Does the Scheme do this? The Committee are loth to believe that it does—the opposite intention, to comprehend differing views, being so manifest—but they experience great difficulty in coming to any other conclusion. It is not merely that episcopal ordination is to be the rule in the United Church: that of itself might present no difficulty, the Bishop becoming the 'Moderator' of the ordaining body, its representative president or spokesman. But in the Scheme he is much more than this. He has himself been 'consecrated by Bishops alone, continuity with whom—or with 'the historic episcopate'—is in this way 'effectively maintained'. In ordaining he has Presbyters associated with him; yet he apparently is the one indispensable functionary through whom the act is performed. He can devolve this function upon no other who has not himself been consecrated to the Episcopal office. And although for the initial period of thirty years assent to these provisions as entering into the constitution of the Church suffices to secure for the non-episcopally ordained Minister full ministerial status in the Church, this is confessedly a temporary arrangement, the fixed form thereafter to be that which the Scheme proposes.

Can it be said that no theory of the episcopate is involved in its *de facto* acceptance on these terms? No doctrine of its nature, it is true, will be required of the ordained on entering upon office—the union of the Churches rests upon the understanding that different views

on the matter will be permissible. On the other hand, the practice of the Church will be uniform, a practice constitutionally defined and secured; and in accordance with it will the non-Episcopalian not find himself pledged to a system whose results can only be justified on the assumption of the truth of a doctrine which he disowns? 'Difficulties and anomalies' in the interregnum are admitted to be inevitable, and they are provided for. But in a Church permanently worked on 'the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry' as here defined, must it not follow, apart from everything else, that the full validity of non-episcopal orders will be questioned? while even though this would surely be contradictory of the whole spirit of the Scheme—the right of the non-episcopally-confirmed Church member to sacramental privileges might come to be denied? But this, for the Presbyterian, would be unwarrantable: it would be to disallow what, on his view, the Spirit of Christ enjoins. Misgivings of the kind would seem to be indicated by the amendments proposed by the Assembly of the South India United Church. The Committee confess that they share these misgivings. And they cannot but think that unless the Scheme be so amended as to remove them, the Church of Scotland would have difficulty in continuing to secure the recruits she would wish to send to the assistance of the United Church. The same hesitations recur in connection with the *third Query*.

> 3. Is the proposed Constitution of the United Church such as will hold forth the hope of a future successful approach in the matter of union to other Protestant Churches not at present included in the scheme? It is conceivable, for instance, that the United Church, including as it will all English-speaking congregations of the Anglican and Wesleyan Churches, and including, temporarily at least, in its ministry a number of ordained ministers of the Church of Scotland, may extend an invitation to the distinctively English-speaking congregations of the Church of Scotland in South India to enter the Scheme?

Chaplains and Congregations belonging to the Church of Scotland could not be expected to entertain a purpose of union with a Church which did not acknowledge their orders or their standard of communicant membership. It is not intended, the Committee believe, that the acceptance of the constitutional arrangements proposed should imply the depreciation of the one or the other. Nevertheless the apprehension remains that in their actual working they will have this effect; and the removal of all ground for such apprehension would materially aid any 'future successful approach in the matter of union to other Protestant Churches not at present included in the Scheme.'

In conclusion, the Committee desire to give expression once more to the hope already indicated that these prolonged labours on the part of the negotiating Churches in South India will yet result in a notable Union achievement, one leaving all Christendom its debtor and at the same time powerfully serving what the Scheme truly describes as the titanic task of winning India for Christ. Ultimately it must be for Indian Christians, with such help as others can give and led by the Spirit of all truth, to say on what lines the Church of Christ in their midst is to be unified and built up; and in the event their ordering of their Church life, in the providential

circumstances in which their lot is cast, may well have new lessons to teach to all the older Churches. If that be so, none, we trust, will be more ready to learn than the Church of Scotland. The truth is, the Protestant Church in all its branches is undergoing education in the high matter of the conditions and principles on which its existing divisions are to be overcome—what may not happen in all our Churches, both at home and on the Mission Field, during the thirty years' experimental stage which the present Union Scheme allows for? If the Committee confess to any uncertainty or venture to put in any caveat, it is in the hope that what ground there may be for this will yet disappear. The promoters of the present movement describe it as 'a real adventure in faith in God and man', and deliberately contemplate 'a process of growing together into one life and of advance towards . . . complete spiritual unity.' The Committee sympathize sincerely with the temper and attitude thus expressed. And their prayer and expectation are that, as the final issue of the consideration of one another's views and convictions still going forward, the foundations of a union may be laid among the negotiating Churches which will fulfil their brethren's highest hopes and give all Christian people occasion to rejoice.

In name of the Committee,
ALEX. MARTIN,
Convener.

September 9, 1930.

'What Shall be Done Now?'

I

By Rev. F. L. MARLER

'What should be done now in order to continue the negotiations, and to bring them to a satisfactory consummation'? is a question more easily asked than answered, as, obviously, the term 'satisfactory consummation' is capable of numerous interpretations. In attempting a reply the writer is keenly aware of the vitiating influence of personal prejudice, but as the suggestions here made comply with the condition that they be based upon 'conscientious reasons', they are offered in the hope that they may not be entirely devoid of value.

All future negotiations should be directed towards the attainment of that degree of common understanding apart from which no union worth the name is possible. And to this end further elucidation of certain vital elements is essential, and, in particular of the historic Episcopate, the conception of the Ministry, and the ultimate character of the United Church. Each of these is of sufficient importance to require an article to itself: only one will be dealt with here, viz.: The historic Episcopate.

What *is* the historic Episcopate?

The statement that 'the uniting churches accept the historic Episcopate in a constitutional form as part of the basis of their union, without intending thereby to imply or to express a judgment on any theory concerning Episcopacy' is not an answer to the question but an evasion of

an issue that must inevitably be faced. That the foundation must be equal to the strain of the superstructure is a first principle of architecture no more to be ignored in the building of a United Church than in the erection of a cathedral. Hence uncertainty with regard to the character of the historic Episcopate is bound to endanger the whole fabric. No attempt to gloss over a vital issue can result in anything other than the danger of disruption.

Since Church Union was the cardinal subject of discussion at the Lambeth Conference of 1930, we naturally turn to its report for a definition of the historic Episcopacy, realizing that the full answer to our question is not to be found in the resolutions of the Conference with regard to the proposed Scheme of Union, but must be sought in their conversations on Church Union with the representatives of episcopal and non-episcopal communions.

In the experience of the bishops their 'heritage of Faith and *Order* seems to be one and indivisible, and to have its roots in *the redemptive method of God in the Incarnation*' (Lambeth Conference report, p. 119.) In other words, a certain method of Church government is part of the plan of salvation.

Sections 2 and 3, p. 127, clearly indicate that the episcopally-ordained ministry of the proposed Scheme of Union is approved because 'an episcopally-ordained ministry is required for the due administration of Holy Communion.'

Negotiations between the Anglican and the Eastern Orthodox churches are reported to have advanced satisfactorily because the Orthodox Church certifies that the Anglican ministry 'possesses the same validity as the *Roman,* Old Catholic, and Armenian churches possess inasmuch as all essentials are found in them which are held indispensable from the Orthodox point of view for the recognition of the charisma of the Priesthood derived from Apostolic Succession' p. 132.

Paragraph 8 on p. 138 makes the position still clearer in the statement by the Anglican bishops that in the Anglican communion ordination is not merely the appointment of a man into a particular post, but in ordination a special charisma is given to the person ordained proper to the *Order* and that the nature of the special gift is indicated in the words of ordination and that in this sense ordination is a *mysterion*.

Further evidence with regard to the Anglican conception of the historic Episcopate is afforded by the acceptance of the declaration of the Old Catholic Church of Holland concerning the validity of Anglican orders, which is regarded as a satisfactory basis for further negotiations in anticipation of ultimate union. That declaration reads as follows, 'We believe that the Church of England has always wished to maintain the episcopal rule of the Church of antiquity and that the Edwardine formula of consecration must be accounted valid. We declare without reservation that the Apostolic Succession has not been broken in the Church of England'.

A study of these passages and of the whole report leaves no room for doubt concerning the conception of the historic Episcopate held by the Lambeth Conference. For the bishops at Lambeth, among whom were all the Indian bishops, Apostolic Succession is not simply the fact that from the time of the Apostles there has been an unbroken succession of

ministers of the Church set apart by the authority of the Church for its ministry, but that through ordination at the hands of bishops special grace and authority have been communicated to a special class of men, who by virtue of that grace and authority have power to exercise functions in the Church forbidden to all not episcopally ordained. The inevitable inference, of course, is that an episcopally-ordained ministry is essential to the Church, and that no community of Christians lacking an episcopally-ordained ministry is, in any true sense, a Church at all.

That this view of the historic Episcopate prevails among Anglicans proposing to unite with the South India United Church is manifest from Section IV of the proposed Scheme of Union which not only recognizes its existence as an obstacle to immediate and complete spiritual unity but makes careful provision to meet the possibility, if not the probability of its persistence. It is on the strength of this Section that Lambeth remarks that 'After the union in South India, Anglicans who will be included in the United Church will not give up the use of the Prayer Book or *discard any of the doctrines held in the Anglican Churches'*.

The conclusion forced upon us then is, that the historic Episcopate accepted in the Proposed Scheme of Union as part of the basis of union is likely to prove a disruptive rather than a uniting factor unless some clearer understanding can be reached with regard to its implications.

Since two cannot walk together except they be agreed it is desirable that in future negotiations this vital issue should be resolutely faced, for, in its present indefinite form, it is the chief obstacle to the acceptance of the scheme.

II

By Mr. R. A. HICKLING

No one can read the Encyclical of the Bishops, or the reports of their Committees, without a sense of pride in the largeness of spirit that they show. These are great Christian men, and they deal worthily with the great subjects that have been under their consideration. Conditioned only by their limited conception of the Church they show great consideration for the views of those who differ from them. Granted the retention of the Episcopate and the securing of an episcopally-ordained ministry they are prepared to go surprising lengths. Their conception of the Church, however, is the great obstacle to the achievement of what they so christianly desire. It is not a conception by which one great visible Church can be achieved. It originated in the Roman Empire and has no necessary relation to the Kingdom of God. The institution of episcopacy was an expedient to meet the difficulties of evil days. We can say the same of the Papacy. The institution that stood up to the privileged brutalities of the Dark Ages has many claims on our gratitude though it is now an instrument of spiritual tyranny. Church order should be viewed in the light of human nature. The Episcopal idea is really political, and the Lord has, both in the temporal and the religious spheres, people of every political complexion. There are those who feel no security apart from an aristocratic guarantee, and there are those who can feel no security that does not

arise, under God, among the people themselves. There are those to whom the grace of God must be mediated by an authoritative person, and there are those who, while unquestionably experiencing the grace, look upon it as profane to claim that some man must make them sure of it. God has made men to differ, and it seems as presumptuous as it is futile, to insist on all accepting some particular scheme for the organization of the Church's life. If God accepts in Christ, and acknowledges men of every type, it is clearly the Church's duty to find a way of doing the same thing. It must enlarge its conception of itself as the Body of Christ. There is really no argument for making Episcopacy binding on the whole Church but the arithmetical one. The bulk of Christians in the world are, and always have been, under Episcopal rule, therefore all the rest had better go under it—such is the argument: but arithmetic has not much relevance in the finer things of human nature, and the principal point in our Faith where it comes in, so far as I know, is in that great promise of our Lord to be in the midst with the two or three.

The only way in which the union contemplated by our Lord can be achieved, is by Christian people becoming large-minded enough to rejoice in each other's faith and to tolerate each other's differences. Our Lord's words in the Gospel of St. John point in this direction 'that they may be one even as we are One'. Nothing could be more apparently diverse than the unseen Father, upholding all things by His power, and the Son, true Man with men's limitations, yet they are One. The unity of the disciples was to be in the Name and in the glory. That unity is with us now, and it can be made explicit without the universal adoption of Episcopacy.

The object of the Bishops, and that of very many people in the South India United Church are different. The former are prepared to go great lengths if their fundamental with regard to authority is granted, the latter cannot understand why every Christian man should not be acknowledged brother now. They 'are not interested in the things that separate them', and want everything swept away that prevents brotherhood being realized. What is proposed is something quite different. One thing is made needful, and it is not a thing that is essential to our religion at all. What a dominating thing this Order of Bishops has become when the mere fact of its acceptance 'apart from any theory concerning it' can be made a condition without which the union of Christian people will be unrelentingly opposed!

The extreme importance of Episcopacy lies in its guarantee of a ministry that can give a valid Sacrament. To very many of us this is a range of ideas for which we have no use—though we would not for a moment deny that for many of our fellow-Christians they have great use. With us the Ministry are honoured teachers whom we rejoice to have lead us. With the Anglicans the Lord's Supper is not valid unless it is celebrated by a minister, and this minister is called a priest. It is all very well, on account of our infirmities, to say that this is but Presbyter 'writ small', and to use the word Presbyter throughout the Scheme of Union. The meaning mostly attached to it by those who use it is 'sacerdos'. They have a right to their view of the Lord's Supper, and to the officials which this view necessitates, but why fasten these officials on to people who have no use for them?

It is argued, I see, that the S.I.U.C. has accepted Episcopacy, and that this is a closed issue. It is by no means closed. However kind our Anglican friends may be about the theory, *we* cannot be content to leave undefined the matter of what a Bishop is. Those in the S.I.U.C. who have accepted Episcopacy have done so mostly because they see no harm in it, constitutionally limited, as a means of Church discipline. The Kanarese Church Council is so anxious that there should be no misunderstanding that it has recently reaffirmed its declaration of 1920, when it accepted Episcopacy, 'that in our view a Bishop does not differ from an ordinary minister'. The question of recognizing a superior order of ministers who guarantee the status and validity of everything else has not been faced anywhere.

To claim the present movement among Christian people in South India as being in favour of Episcopacy is wrong. The movement is, with the best of intentions, being used for purposes of which it is not conscious. It should be used to further a new tolerance and a new large-heartedness in all sections of the Church. The only advantage of the proposed Union will be the enlargement of the Episcopal Section of the Church at the expense of a Communion whose origin was in mutual toleration. The loss will be that a movement inspired by God for getting us to transcend our differences will have been used to establish one of them more firmly than ever.

Note on 'The Unworthiness of the Minister Hinders not the Effect of the Sacrament'

It will be remembered that the Anglican General Council at Calcutta has asked that Section III A, para. 5 of the Scheme of Union should be reworded so as to make this principle sufficiently clear. In this connection I think that the following extract from an article in the Anglican monthly *Theology* for October 1930 may be of interest. I believe that the position taken by the writer would be accepted by all, or nearly all, Anglicans except for the wording of the last clause of paragraph 3, of which many would not approve. While he is directly speaking of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, his principles would, of course, apply also to Baptism. Summarizing his argument, he says—'We believe:

1. That in virtue of the promise of His abiding presence with His Church, our Lord is Himself the real Minister in every Sacrament, using the visible acts and the audible words of an earthly minister appointed to that end;

2. That the Liturgical Prayer, taken as a whole and ratified by the people's 'Amen', constitutes the Consecration, as the act of the unseen Lord in which the officiating minister and worshipping congregation alike have their mutual and distinctive parts to perform;

3. That such Consecration has a real effect, the consecrated elements being charged with a new spiritual significance and purpose, and being now the Body and Blood of Christ as well as bread and wine;

4. That the act of Consecration passes into effect in virtue of the Divine Will and of the intention of the Church as a whole, apart from the character or faith of individuals, though the benefits of participation in the Sacrament depend upon the spiritual attitude of the worshipper.'

I quote this statement specially because I think it brings out well the reason why we Anglicans specially desire that the principle stated in the heading of this note should be made clear. We value this principle not so much (if I may say so) for its own sake as because it carries with it the deeper principle that in the Sacraments there are real acts of God, real gifts from God, and that the benefits to be received from the Sacraments, while conditioned by our faith, are not merely created by our faith. God's power and grace is there waiting for us.

BISHOPSTOWE, FREDERICK TINNEVELLY.
PALAMCOTTAH,
October 21, 1930.

Extract from The Lambeth Report

The Unity of the Church

We pass to the subject of the Unity of the Church, which was assigned to our third Committee.

Our Lord Himself prayed that those who should believe on Him might be one, that the world might believe that His father had sent Him. The witness which He wishes us to bear to Him before the world is our unity in Him. A world torn with divisions is pathetically ready to acclaim our unity, when it comes into sight, as an evidence of the power of God.

In the Conference of 1920 we felt the constraint of a great impulse which we believed to be of Divine origin, and under its influence we sent out the Appeal to all Christian people. In this Conference we have something even greater to chronicle, definite actions tending to unions of Churches, in which some of our Churches are closely concerned. If holy aspirations are great, God-guided actions are greater.

Many movements towards unity have taken place in the last ten years. These we cannot here describe. Particulars of them will be found in the Report of our Committee. We will write specially of two movements because they are now approaching the phase of definite action.

The first of these concerns some of the oldest Churches in Christendom. A most important delegation from the Orthodox Churches of the East arranged by the Œcumenical Patriarch and headed by the Patriarch of Alexandria visited our Conference. Another delegation headed by the Archbishop of Utrecht represented the Old Catholics. Both of these delegations came to tell us that they desired definite and practical steps to be taken for the restoration of communion between their Churches and ours,

This is a notable advance crowning a long period of increasing friendliness. The Conference has asked the Archbishop of Canterbury to appoint Commissions of theologians to confer with similar Commissions if appointed by the authorities of the Orthodox and of the Old Catholics, and it is hoped that these Commissions may find such a unity in faith and such a similarity in practice to exist between the Churches, that restoration of communion may become possible as soon as the appropriate assemblies of the various Churches can meet.

In the second place, we must refer at greater length to the scheme for a union of Churches in South India, which had been begun a year before the last Lambeth Conference, and has now reached an advanced stage. Our brethren of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon, who will have the responsibility for carrying it through, if it is to be consummated, have reported the scheme in its present state to the Conference and asked for our advice. Our Committee has tendered advice on many points in its report, to which the Conference has given its general approval. This scheme is for a union in South India between the members of our Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and the South India United Church, so-called because it unites the converts of certain Presbyterian and Congregationalist missions. The general conception of the scheme is that these different elements will come together in one body, possessing the traditional framework of faith and order which characterized the whole Church for so many centuries. Within this one body the constant intercourse of the different members will, it is hoped, gradually bring about a unity, in which all those things that are of God in their several traditions will be not only preserved but enriched by happy combination. This process cannot be initiated without sacrifices, and must in its early stages involve anomalies and irregularities—a prospect which gives rise to serious misgivings in many minds. But these misgivings are outweighed by hope and by our trust in God's will to perfect His work of reconciliation.

We rejoice that one part of the Anglican Communion should be found ready to make this venture for a corporate union with certain non-episcopal Churches. We feel that in a sense our brethren in South India are making this experiment on behalf of the whole body of the Anglican Churches. They are our pioneers in this direction of the movement for unity. The whole Communion will surely stand by them with earnest prayer and generous loyalty. But we are well aware that the constituency which we represent is not universally convinced about all the provisions of the scheme, and wishes to see how it works out, before committing itself to definite approval. To meet this situation we have recommended to the Churches concerned certain arrangements which we desire to explain to our people in the clearest terms.

The Anglican Communion is a group of Churches bound together by very close ties of history and tradition, doctrine and practice. After the union in South India, Anglicans who will be included in the United Church will not give up the use of the Prayer Book or discard any of the doctrines held in the Anglican Churches. Yet the United Church in South India will not itself be an Anglican Church; it will be a distinct Province of the Universal Church. It will have a very real inter-communion with the Churches of the Anglican Communion, though for a time that inter-communion will be limited in certain directions by their rules. Its Bishops will be received as Bishops by these Churches. Its episcopally-ordained ministers—a continually increasing number—will be entitled under the usual rules to administer the Communion in the Churches of the Anglican Communion. Its communicants will be entitled to communicate with the Churches of the Anglican Communion, except in cases forbidden by the rules of these Churches. On the other hand, no right to minister in the Churches of that Communion will be acquired by those ministers who have not been episcopally ordained.

The fact that the Church in South India will not be a member of the group of Churches called the Anglican Communion will inevitably impose on our brethren a temporary severance of close and treasured relationships, in council and synod, with their brethren in North India. But these are sacrifices which we believe they will make cheerfully in the hope of achieving a union between Episcopal and non-Episcopal Churches such as has never yet been effected, and of building up a real and living Church in India. For our part, we assure our brethren that they will never be disowned nor deserted by the Anglican Communion. It will preserve for them unimpaired their welcome to its love and fellowship, to its altars and its pulpits. For it will be looking forward to the day when their work will be rewarded and the unity of these Churches, not only in South India, but in the whole of India, will be completed, and there will emerge a province of Christ's Church, genuinely Catholic, loyal to all truth, within whose visible unity treasures of Faith and Order, nowhere in the Church at present combined, will be possessed in common, and the power of Christ will be manifest in a new richness.

It was with unanimity and with profound sense of thankfulness that the Conference adopted the resolutions relating to South India.

We have given prominence to these two groups of negotiations because they contemplate action in the near future. Though in other directions, and especially in our relations with the non-Episcopal Churches of our various countries, no such measurable advance can be recorded, we feel that the aspirations of the last Lambeth Conference have not failed, but are standing the strain of the attempt to translate words into action. In

addition to delegations from Episcopal Churches other than those which we have mentioned, our Committee had the privilege of receiving and conferring with distinguished representatives of the now happily united Church of Scotland and of the Evangelical Free Churches of England. It was with renewed hope of progress that the Conference decided to invite these non-Episcopal Churches to enter into full conference with us once more. Further, it adopted unanimously a resolution in favour of 'efforts of Evangelism in co-operation with Christians of other Communions,' believing that, while the leaders discuss the still unsolved problems of Church Order, the rank and file may be brought to closer mutual understanding through united public witness to those truths of our Faith which we rejoice to know we hold in common. May God reinforce the impulse which He gave ten years ago with courage, wisdom and love to pursue the quest of the visible unity of the whole Church of Christ.

(*To be continued*)

Clippings

(SEE EDITORIAL IN THIS NUMBER ON 'WHAT IS THE CHURCH')

The Editor of the *United Church Review*.

Dear Sir,

I have read with interest the editorial article in your September issue on *The Idea of the Church and the Historic Episcopate*. To deal fully with it would require a longer letter than is desirable, but I must ask space for a reference to one point of vital importance.

In arguing that Episcopacy is to be considered from the point of view of its conformity with the New Testament ideal, and not merely accepted because of the historic continuity which it gives with the Church of past centuries, you say, 'Our idea of the Christian Church is—that it is the finest possible example of a great spiritual brotherhood in Christ. Being so, its system of government ought to reflect that idea; it ought to be essentially democratic.' To the first of these sentences no exception can be taken. But when in the second you identify brotherhood in Christ with democracy you bring into the affairs of the Church a term which belongs to a very different sphere. The Church of Christ is not democratic; nor is it aristocratic, or monarchical. These terms have all to do with the kingdoms of the world. If we are to use a word of like formation, we may

say that the Church is theocratic or Christocratic. Christ alone is its True Ruler.

This, however, leaves open for consideration the question as to the method by which the Head of the Church can carry on His government within it. This question may be looked at from two points of view. We may ask, first, if any method of government is declared in the New Testament to be that which Christ will use. Is it not a matter of fairly general agreement that the answer to this question is in the negative? The best Anglican scholars admit that Episcopacy as we understand it is not found till a later time. Is there any Presbyterian scholar nowadays who is sure that Presbyterianism is of Scriptural origin? Some may still contend that the government of the early Church was Congregational, though if by Congregationalism they mean that there is no human authority over the individual congregation, they must admit not only that the apostles claimed some authority over the Churches they had founded, but that they could delegate authority to assistants like Timothy and Titus. Perhaps a more plausible claim to a New Testament origin can be made by 'The Brethren'. It was precisely the idea of 'a great spiritual brotherhood' that led some saintly men, about a century ago, to withdraw from all existing Churches—whether Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Congregational in their form of government—and meet simply as brothers in Christ. They were content with no half-measures. Nothing, they thought, but a return to apostolic simplicity would reunite the Church of Christ, and their hope was that this would be realized and all true believers join them. The subsequent history of this movement is significant and instructive. The original leaders gathered round them a select few, while the great majority considered it best to adhere to the Church in which they had been brought up. But soon the unity even of the few was sadly broken. They differed among themselves as to the nature of 'apostolic simplicity,' and before long became divided into a number of sections, some of which are mutually exclusive. Thus we do not find here, any more than in the other systems, a clear lead from the New Testament.

This leads to our second question: by which system, as shown in the history of the Church, can Christ best exercise His government? He would be a bold man who would attempt such a sweeping view of history as to give a confident answer to this question. The Church was early led, for such reasons as those mentioned in the passage you quote from Dr. Foakes-Jackson, to adopt Episcopacy. As centuries passed the system which at first was helpful, developed into a tyranny, and this led to the great liberating movement of the Reformation. But it must be noted that that movement was not in its essence a movement against Episcopacy. Luther cared nothing for methods of government, and so it came about

that the Lutheran Churches of Scandinavia are Episcopal to this day, while other Lutheran Churches have a government more nearly approaching Presbyterianism. The English reformers considered that the spiritual liberty which in common with others they sought could be obtained without abandoning Episcopacy, and so they retained it, not as essential but as a system which they considered to be conducive to the well-being of the Church. Other reformers took a different view, with the result that many of the Churches of the Reformation are non-Episcopal. In rejecting Episcopacy they gained something, for there can be little doubt that the Presbyterian and Congregational systems do more for the development of congregational life than Episcopacy generally does. Yet the Episcopalian may claim on the other hand that the system to which he adheres is a better safeguard of unity. Sweeping generalizations, I repeat, are dangerous, but who can deny that Christ has not confined His grace to any one of the various systems? As Supreme Lord of the Church, He has exercised His gracious rule through each of them.

We who are hoping for union in South India on the lines of the *Proposed Scheme of Union* do not consider it necessary to form an accurate historical judgment on the relative value of Episcopal and non-Episcopal government. Even if we all held, as some among us hold, that on the whole Episcopacy had been less helpful to the Church's life than, say, Presbyterianism, this would not deter us from union on the proposed basis. We may hold that even if the evils of Episcopacy can be shown to be great, the evils of a divided Church are greater. We may hold too that the alleged evils of Episcopacy are not inherent in the system, and there is every reason to hope that with the safeguards provided in the Scheme, the system will work well. Our intercourse with our Anglican friends has convinced us that their Church has a great heritage of life and power in which the Christians of the other negotiating Churches ought to share. On the other hand we believe that our Churches have a contribution to make, and that in the united Church they will have an opportunity of making it which is denied them at present. We thus believe that the 'spiritual brotherhood' which we all aim at, will be better realized in a union of this sort than it can be by the retention of our present divisions.

It is from this point of view that we regard Episcopacy. To us its 'historicalness' is a matter of indifference. Whether it can be traced back to apostolic times or not matters little. The Anglicans of South India, in desiring to unite with us, wish to do so without being put out of fellowship with the Church of their origin, as they would be if they entered a union on a non-Episcopal basis, or on an Episcopal basis which broke the historical connection with the Church of England. Some may take a 'higher' view of Episcopacy, but even those in the Church of England who

reject that view are not willing to look on the form of Church government as an open question. They accordingly ask us to accept Episcopacy. If by doing so we in turn were put out of fellowship with the Churches of *our* origin, we would of course have to say that the day for union had not come. But we see no reason why the adoption of Episcopacy should have any such effect. We have made it abundantly clear that we cannot cut ourselves off from full communion with other Protestant Churches, and our claim has been acknowledged by our fellow-negotiators. Is there any reason to fear that the Churches of the West will cast *us* off because we are ready to enter a union on an Episcopal basis? Surely the thing is inconceivable.

I am, etc.,
J. H. MACLEAN.

CONJEEVERAM,
September 9, 1930.

Church Union in North India

A Second Round Table Conference

At the Round Table Conference held at Lucknow in April 1929 on the subject of Church Union in North India, a Continuation Committee was appointed to arrange, *inter alia*, 'for another Conference to be held later, if approved by two or more Churches.' This Continuation Committee has now issued an invitation to a second Round Table Conference to be held in Delhi on Tuesday, November 18, 1930, and following days.

'Those Churches which have considered the report of the Lucknow Conference and are ready to continue negotiations with a view to Union, along with any others willing to join in this attempt to find a common basis, are invited to send delegates to this Conference up to the number of four each. Each Church is expected to meet the travelling expenses, etc., of its own delegates.'

It is requested that the names and addresses of delegates be forwarded as soon as convenient to Rev. A. E. Hubbard, Baptist Mission, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi, and also to the Convener of the Continuation Committee, Rev. A. R. Low, Jaipur, Rajputana.

North Tamil Church Council

Church Union Resolutions

Preamble. The North Tamil Church Council would remind the Churches that negotiations for Church Union between the Anglicans, Wesleyans and the South Indian United Church have been proceeding for some years, and as a result of these negotiations, the Union Committee composed of delegates from these Churches has submitted a Proposed Scheme of Union to all the Churches for their consideration. The General Assembly considered the Proposed Scheme last October and decided to submit it to the Councils with a number of suggested amendments for their consideration. The North Tamil Church Council at its meeting in July, 1930, considered the scheme in the light of the Assembly's suggested amendments and suggested a few further amendments. The N.T.C.C. herewith submits the Scheme together with the Assembly's resolutions and the N.T.C.C. resolutions for the consideration of the Churches, and urges every Church to give this matter its careful and prayerful consideration and send its opinions and resolutions to the Convener of the N.T.C.C. Union Committee on or before December 1, 1930.

General Assembly Amendments

I (1) Resolved to recommend to the Church Councils the Scheme of Union for their careful study, and to suggest that wherever possible members of Joint Committee, both Anglican and Wesleyan, be invited to the meetings of the Councils to explain any matter in the scheme that may seem ambiguous.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the above resolution.

(2) In referring the Scheme of the Councils, the Assembly desires to make the observation that if a Union of our Church with the Anglican and the Wesleyan Churches is to be accomplished that can only be done by formulating a scheme which will secure that the Church will be a common spiritual home for the various schools of thought and practice in the uniting bodies on a basis of mutual toleration and respect, and not by attempting to secure uniformity.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

II (1) The uniting Churches, recognizing that the Episcopate, the Council of Presbyters, and the Congregation of the faithful must all have their appropriate places in the order of life of the united Church, accept in particular the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union. In doing so they declare their intention that no particular theory regarding Episcopacy shall become the official doctrine of the united Church and they do not commit themselves to the position that the Episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a valid and an invalid ministry.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

(2) That a provision be incorporated in the scheme that Presbyters shall take part along with the bishops in all subsequent consecrations of bishops and not only at the consecration of the first bishops and that the relevant clauses in Sections III and VII be suitably modified.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

(3) Section IV B. para. 2.

While such authority must inhere in the United Church it is the deliberate intention of the uniting Churches that none of the ministers or members of the united Church shall because of the union forego any rights with regard to inter-communion and inter-celebration which these churches possessed before the Union.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

(4) Section IV B (1) the last sentence.

After this period of thirty years the United Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an Episcopally ordained ministry, provided that the state of those who by that time have already been admitted shall not be affected.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

(5) That no minister of the United Church shall be restrained from inviting to the Lord's Table members of other Churches who are communicants in good standing.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

(6) That in regard to Section VII, Part IA. 3 we desire to state that if the bishop is not satisfied with the declaration of faith of a candidate for ordination, he shall consult *three* other bishops of the church before making a decision.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

(7) That in regard to the powers of the Synod, after the Bishops have stayed action in the Synod as in Section VIII C (7), the matter thus stayed shall be dealt with in accordance with the principles laid down in Section XIII A.

The N.T.C.C. accepts the resolution.

(8) The N.T.C.C. deletes this resolution (No. 9).

Instead of G. A. Resolution No. VI, the following resolution (with the Wesleyans):

(1) That there should be in the constitution a clear definition or limitation of the power of the Bishop, including his right of veto and his part in the reception and stationing of ministers and that authority should be given to the Diocesan Council to express its opinion at regular intervals to the Synod as to whether it is in the interest of the work of God that its Bishop should continue in office.

The N.T.C.C. Resolutions

1. Section III A para. 3.

They accept the Apostles Creed and the creed commonly called the Nicene as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith, which is continuously confirmed in the spiritual experience of the Church of Christ, and as containing a sufficient, but not *necessary* statement thereof for a basis of Union.

2. That we as a council desire union, but we consider the Proposed Scheme of Union needs amending before it should be accepted by the Council. We believe the above amendments if acceptable to the other negotiating churches would meet our chief objections and that the Proposed Scheme thus amended would be a sound basis for union.

3. That the resolutions of the Assembly and the opinion and resolutions of this Council together with the Scheme of Union, be submitted to all the Churches and that they may be asked to consider carefully and submit to the N.T.C.C. union Committee on or before December 1, 1930.

4. That we submit these decisions to the Directors of the London Missionary Society as our tentative opinion, subject to the consideration of the Churches and ask their opinion upon them.

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Secretary,
North Tamil Church Council.

Printed and published for the Christian Literature Society by the Diocesan Press, Madras, 1930